

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BERN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4219
INFO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERN 1667

DEPARTMENT FOR A, PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR APPOINTMENT AND
ADVANCE OFFICE

BONN FOR BUFFALO ONLY

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJ: PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO EUROPE

REF: BERN 1639

1. I TALKED BRIEFLY WITH GENEVA POLICE SUPERINTENDENT
PIERRE KNECHT AT THE AIRPORT LAST NIGHT AND AT GREATER
LENGTH WITH HEGNER IN BERN EARLY THIS MORNING. MY IM-
PRESSION IS THAT THE SWISS ARE GETTING READY TO COME
AROUND TO THE INTERCONTINENTAL AS A MEETING SITE IF THAT
IS WHAT WE WANT. IN THIS CONNECTION I STRONGLY RECOMMEND
WE SEND A SECRET SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE BACK TO
SWITZERLAND THIS WEEK. NOT ONLY WILL THIS HELP
KNECHT MODIFY HIS OWN POSITION FAVORING ANOTHER SITE WITHOUT
TOO MUCH PERSONAL EMBARRASSMENT BUT IT WILL ALSO ENABLE
THE SWISS TO AVOID INVOLVING THE SYRIANS IN THESE
QUESTIONS WHILE WE ARE WORKING THINGS OUT.

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2. HEGNER AND I DISCUSSED PRESS SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS
AS WE UNDERSTOOD THEM - INCLUDING PRESS NUMBERS AND
CONTROL, TELETYPE FACILITIES, POWER SOURCES AND TV
LOGISTICS. HEGNER CONCLUDED THAT THE INTERCONTINENTAL
IS PROBABLY THE ONLY FACILITY IN THE GENEVA AREA -
AND CERTAINLY THE ONLY ONE VISITED YESTERDAY - THAT WOULD
BE ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY IN THESE TERMS. WE AGREE THAT

SYSTEMATIC AND EFFECTIVE FACILITIES TO SUPPORT AND CONTROL PRESS ACCESS HAD THEIR OWN SECURITY IMPORTANCE. HEGNER SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL IF OUR SECRET SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PRESS EXPERT, ALTHOUGH I NOTED THAT WE ALREADY HAVE EXPERTISE AVAILABLE. HEGNER SAID WHATEVER WAY WE WANT TO HANDLE THIS POINT IS FINE WITH HIM.

3. HEGNER WILL TALK THROUGH THE ISSUES WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN GENEVA BEFORE HE DEPARTS FOR STOCKHOLM LATER TODAY (RETURNING MONDAY). HIS DEPUTY CLAUDIO CARATSCH WHO WILL BE IN CHARGE DURING HIS ABSENCE WILL FOLLOW THROUGH. HEGNER WILL ASK FEDERAL POLICE SERVICE CHIEF AMSTEIN TO GET TOGETHER WITH KNECHT TO HELP WORK THINGS OUT. HE ASSURED ME THE SWISS FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND SENIOR GENEVA AUTHORITIES ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE GET FULLY SATISFACOTORY ARRANGEMENTS (AND SENIOR GENEVA AUTHORITIES HAVE ASSURED ME OF THEIR FULL COMMITMENT TO DO EVERYTHING NECESSARY).

4. HEGNER SAID ABOUT 200 GUESTS WILL BE MOVING OUT OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL ON THE MORNING OF THE NINTH, ADDING THAT THE SWISS GOVERNMENT MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE HOTEL MANAGEMENT TO LEAVE THOSE ROOMS VACANT FOR A NIGHT. I NOTED OUR PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC COMMITMENT BOTH TO FRUGALITY AND TO A MODEST AND CONSIDERATE STYLE IN THE U S GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AND NOTED THAT THE EXPULSION OF A LARGE NUMBER OF GUESTS FROM A GREAT HOTEL MIGHT PRESENT DIFFICULTIES. HEGNER SAID HE
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FULLY UNDERSTOOD.

5. REGARDING THE SYRIANS, HEGNER SAID HE DID NOT INTEND TO SEND ANY TELEGRAM TO DAMASCUS FOR THE PRESENT, AND WOULD WAIT UNTIL WE WORK OUR OUR PREFERENCES. THIS IS THE PRINCIPAL REASON WHY HEGNER VERY MUCH HOPES WE CAN SEND OUR SECRET SERVICE REPRESENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AS HE BELIEVES THE SYRIANS WILL WANT THEIR REPRESENTATIVES TO COME EARLY NEXT WEEK. HEGNER EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE SWISS AUTHORITIES AT EVERY LEVEL WILL BE FULLY BEHIND THE SOLUTION WE COME DOWN ON WHEN WE AND THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ALL THE SECURITY QUESTIONS THROUGH.

6. IN THE MEANTIME THE SWISS WILL BE LOOKING FURTHER INTO POSSIBLE ALTERNATE MEETING SITES AND PRESS SUPPORT POSSIBILITIES. DAVIS

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